

3/22/18 Mr. Merit Curriculum Subcommittee

To: Senate MMC Subcommittee

From: Joe Ankley

RE: MMC Flexibility

In Huron County, there are over 700 students enrolled in six agriculture, food and natural resources education programs. I am fortunate to have some of those students in my classroom at North Huron School in Kinde. Many of these students also actively participate in FFA. This involvement helps the thumb area continue to be a leader in the agriculture industry.

One reason students are able to take agriculture, food and natural resources classes is because of the current flexibility allowed to the Michigan Merit Curriculum. When the flexibility was allowed, our enrollment increased. The sun-setting of these changes will hurt our ag programs in Huron County and the entire state. They will also negatively impact skilled trade programs throughout the entire state.

The extension of MMC flexibility or another approach to flexibility in the curriculum is necessary for student success.

I teach core classes every day and as an educator I understand the importance of many of those classes. However, we have students that will not be attending a four year university and that do not need every class that is part of the MMC graduation requirements. These students are those that will be working in skilled trades or similar fields; the jobs that are extremely important to our area.

We need a common sense approach to curriculum requirements, understanding that our students will not only be doctors and lawyers, but will also be farmers, builders, electricians and welders. That approach starts by reevaluating the MMC.

Thank you for your time. Please feel free to reach out to me at ankleyj@nhuron.org or 810-247-3680.

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